



Licensed Public Pools, Spas Phase 2 Reopening Guidance in Response to COVID-19

May 26, 2020

Montanans have succeeded in limiting the spread and impacts of COVID-19 by working together and following guidance that has been provided. This has presented an opportunity to move to Phase 2 of the Reopening the Big Sky strategy. A directive issued by the governor on May 19 specifically allows for expansion of business at gym and public accommodation pools and the opening of public pools. Strict physical distancing protocols must be in place and operation is limited to 75% capacity. Please note the following **requirements** for Phase Two beginning **Monday, June 1, 2020**:

1. **Prior to reopening, test and maintain water chemistry** within acceptable parameters for safe use. The CDC has indicated that properly maintained pool water inactivates the virus. If you cannot maintain the pool/spa within acceptable limits, you must keep it closed.
2. **Post signage** identifying restrictions where it can easily be seen.
 - a. Use the following, or similar, wording on the signs: “Anyone with fever, shortness of breath, a cough, or other COVID-19 symptoms must refrain from using the facility.”
 - b. Position signs on locker room doors with wording along the lines of, “Observe social distancing while using this facility. No loitering in common areas.”
 - c. Posters are available at the [CDC website](#).
3. **Operate the pool at 75% of usual capacity.**
 - a. Have a front desk/gate attendant track occupancy for each pool/spa, incoming and outgoing, to ensure maximum occupancy does not exceed 75% of normal capacity.
 - b. Public Accommodations pools are restricted to registered guests.
 - c. Gym pools are restricted to members, no day passes or walk-ins are allowed.
4. **Monitor locker rooms** to ensure they are not becoming crowded and patrons are observing physical distancing.
5. **Maintain physical distancing** of at least 6 feet between unassociated parties.
 - a. Do not allow congregating in waiting areas. Provide ways to ensure that patrons can stay at least 6 feet apart in any line.
 - b. Space deck tables and chairs to facilitate 6-foot spacing;
 - c. Exceptions to the physical distancing guidance include:

1. Anyone rescuing a distressed swimmer, providing first aid, or performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation, with or without an automated external defibrillator.
2. Individuals in the process of evacuating an aquatic venue or entire facility due to an emergency.
- d. Allow groups of no more than 50 for events (family groups and unrelated individuals must maintain 6-foot separation);
- e. Avoiding group events, gatherings, or meetings both in and out of the water if physical distancing of at least 6 feet between people who don't live together cannot be maintained.
- f. If planned events must be conducted, staggering drop-off and pick-up times, as much as possible, to maintain distance of at least 6 feet between people who don't live together.
- g. Where possible, use buoys and floating pool ropes to mark off lanes or areas of pool for separation of large swimming areas;
- h. Where possible, mark stairs and walkways with directional arrows to keep in/out traffic separated.
- i. **Hold swim classes and lessons using** physical distancing. Youth activities can have groups of no more than 10 if circumstances do not readily allow for physical distancing.
- j. Use only equipment that can be easily cleaned and disinfected between users.

Lewis and Clark Public Health has the following **additional guidance** to help protect staff and guests from disease.

1. **Develop a written plan** to manage Phase Two operations. Be sure to address any issues unique to your operations and location.
2. **Assess the health** of all employees at the beginning of each shift. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 must be sent home. These include cough, difficulty breathing, fever, repeated shaking with chills, chills, body aches, headache, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell.
3. **Implement engineering controls** as appropriate for your business. These might include installing physical barriers, such as clear-plastic sneeze guards, between staff and guests.
4. Assign monitoring responsibility for handwashing, use of cloth face coverings, or physical distancing to a staff member that is not actively lifeguarding.
5. **Support respiratory etiquette and hand hygiene** for employees and members:
 - a. Strongly **encourage or require the use of cloth face masks** that fully cover the mouth and nose for employees and guests. Advise those wearing face coverings to **not** wear them in the water. Cloth face coverings can be difficult to breathe through when wet.
 - a. Provide tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles throughout the facility.

- b. Provide hand-washing facilities with soap and water and single-use towels. If soap and water are not readily available, provide an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
 - c. Place hand sanitizers in several locations to encourage hand hygiene.
6. **Routinely clean and sanitize** all surfaces touched by employees and guests. Also clean frequently touched surfaces, such doorknobs, handrails, and light switches.
- d. Use the cleaning agents that you usually use in these areas, and follow the directions on the labels.
 - e. A list of sanitizers effective for COVID-19 is located on the EPA website:
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2> Be sure to **strictly follow specified contact times and mix rates.**

If you have questions or need technical assistance, please call Lewis and Clark Public Health at 457-8900. Thank you for protecting our community from COVID-19.

If you suspect Coronavirus, contact your medical provider.

For a link to this document and other local information: www.lccountymt.gov/covid-19